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Statement on the Catholic and Marianist Identity of the University Of Dayton

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I am like a brook that makes no effort to overcome obstacles in its way. All the obstacles can do is hold me up for a while, as a brook is held up; but during that time it grows broader and deeper and after a while it overflows the obstruction and flows along again. That is how I am going to work.

—Father Chaminade

At this point I confront the glorious and yet inevitably frightening reality which underlies all I have been saying as it underlies all of life. I mean the central Christian fact that God became human. Without this fact the Catholic enterprise would not make sense. I say this because it is only the assurance that we know God fully, clearly, and only, in the human fact of Jesus of Nazareth which makes it impossible to reject any aspect of creation as irrelevant to the Kingdom of God.

—Rosemary Haughton

STATEMENT ON THE CATHOLIC AND MARIANIST IDENTITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Committee on the Catholic and Marianist Identity
of the University
14 December 1990

Preface

- (1.) The University of Dayton has long celebrated its heritage as a Catholic and Marianist university. Daily and annually, in the ordinary and extraordinary occasions of the life of the University, the people of the University community acknowledge in tangible, visible ways the University's grounding in the tradition of Catholicism and in the Family of Mary. Each succeeding generation benefits from appropriating anew the vision and inspiration that guided the founders of our institution. Therefore, it is important that our acknowledgment and celebration of our heritage become more conscious and explicit, a sustained examination and reaffirmation of the traditions in which the University grounds itself.
- (2.) The University Direction Statement affirms the Catholic and Marianist character of the University of Dayton while situating it in the tradition of American higher education.
- (3.) Our mission has its foundation in the values of three educational traditions: American independent higher education, Catholic higher education, and Marianist education. Although these traditions have different origins and histories, they come together in the mission of the university like the different colored threads in an ornate tapestry. Each tradition enriches and complements the other and, together, they project the spirit and nature of the University of Dayton.
- (4.) As a Catholic and Marianist institution of higher education, the University of Dayton builds on a rich legacy. Drawing on that legacy, members of the University community dedicate themselves to a vision of education that affirms at its heart the fullness and complexity of human existence, the need and desire for community, and the reality of the transcendent. In all these things we follow the path set out for us most profoundly by Jesus Christ in his saving mission and then, most importantly for this university community, by his faithful missionary, the French priest William Joseph Chaminade, who, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, gathered together and inspired groups of faithful women and men to lay down their lives in service to others.
- (5.) Living our tradition fully means understanding its history and circumstances and distinctiveness. Continually reaffirmed in all its richness, it offers us a sense of our connection with those who have preceded us in our educational enterprise, a source of inspiration for the carrying out of our daily tasks, and a unique perspective from which to speak to the culture in which we are embedded—and, by extension, to the world as it is yet to be.

Unity amidst diversity

- (6.) Clearly, the claim that something is *characteristic* of the University of Dayton does not imply that it is *unique to* the University of Dayton, nor that it derives solely from the University's Catholic and Marianist character. Nonetheless, we continually look to these traditions for an understanding of what we are and for guidance in deciding what we want to be.

- (7.) Reflecting on the nature of our Catholic and Marianist heritage can highlight not only how the University expresses fully the life-giving aspects of its tradition, but also the extent to which we have not yet achieved the highest of our ideals. The sometimes distressing gap between these ideals and our reality should provide an opportunity not for divisive recrimination but for cooperative aspiration.
- (8.) The Catholic and Marianist identity of the University of Dayton presupposes not only the existence but also the importance of other religious traditions. In addition, the University welcomes the greater emphasis in recent years on a university's responsibility to ensure social and cultural diversity among its students, faculty, and staff, for a university that embodies and celebrates the cultural richness of the world prepares students well for an effective role in an increasingly pluralistic society. More fundamentally, a diverse university community acknowledges by its very existence one of the most important elements of a liberal education: a greater appreciation for the multifaceted manifestations of the human spirit.
- (9.) Every true university contains within itself a paradox: it is a place both of unity and of diversity. The origin of the word "university"—from two Latin words that mean a "turning" about the "one"—suggests a coming together, but of differing, even conflicting, elements. The traditional Catholic belief that God is the source of life and truth gives a Catholic university the confidence to welcome diversity in people and in ideas. The welcoming of people of many backgrounds and opinions is clearly consonant with the uniquely inclusive orientation of the Catholic tradition. Further, the tradition also holds that, however inadequate our conceptual tools, however tentative the connections among ideas, however elusive the truth, it remains possible continually to grow in insight into the mystery of reality. Because of this ultimate confidence, the Catholic identity of a university enhances the scholarly community's ability to understand, appreciate, analyze, and criticize the diverse ways of living, thinking, and perceiving that make up our world. All universities, then, strive to maintain diversity while seeking unity, but this commitment is especially appropriate in a Catholic university.
- (10.) In the pursuit of these ideals—the full and vital living out of the best of our traditions—the choices made about where the University concentrates its energies are not arbitrary or accidental. All of the University's main tasks—teaching, research, and service, both as contributor to and critic of society—are pursued distinctively. As a preface to our reflection on the University's identity as Catholic and Marianist, we reflect first on the qualities possessed by any excellent university.

That only is true enlargement of mind which is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values, and determining their mutual dependence.

—John Henry Newman

A University

A community of learners

- (11.) Stated most simply, the purpose of a university is to discover, preserve, and disseminate knowledge about the world and humanity's place in it. The complex reality that embodies this purpose resists a similarly concise summary.
- (12.) The University's Mission Statement professes the University of Dayton's mission to be teaching, research, service, and service as a critic of society. All of these elements are essential and complementary.
- (13.) *Teaching* is the introduction and apprenticeship of undergraduate and graduate students to the worlds of liberal and professional knowledge, to the crafts of teaching and research, and to the responsibility for leadership in a variety of fields and in society. Teachers strive for competence and commitment, careful attention to their subjects and to their students. Together, teachers and students form a community of learning to which each member makes a singular contribution.
- (14.) *Research* is at one and the same time the most individual and the most social act of scholars, an act of character and an act of community. Research is evidence of scholars' commitment to their disciplines, evidence of their mastery of particular fields, evidence of their self-control, creativity, and imagination. At the same time, research is a social act, involving scholars with one another, with students, and with society in general, contributing to the fund of knowledge in a particular field and ultimately to humanity's understanding of the world.
- (15.) *Service* refers to the willingness of members of the University community to be of assistance beyond the confines of the university, in the larger world its members inhabit. Members of the University community offer their professional and personal talents to those who might benefit from them. Additionally, the privilege and obligation of service exists within the University: in the very practical doing of the work of the University, and in the less tangible but no less real strengthening and support of one another. Faculty, staff, and students contribute individually to the welfare of all.

Everybody has his filter, which he takes about with him, through which, from the indefinite mass of facts, he gathers in those suited to confirm his prejudices. Rare, very rare are those who check their filter.

—Henri de Lubac

- (16.) *Service as a critic of society* is the University's obligation to contribute to the positive transformation of the social and cultural order. To that end, the university fosters views of the human person that are consonant with basic human dignity and with concern for the global community. Members of the university community also strive to be at the forefront of promoting honesty and integrity in the natural and human sciences and in the humanities. Thus the university commits itself to unmasking and eliminating fallacious reasoning, prejudice, overly selective readings of history, the abuse of statistical data, reductive views of the human person, and any form of intellectual charlatanism. The university should be something of an institutional Socrates, making the complacent, beginning with those in its midst, uncomfortable—because it compels them to think.

One enterprise, many initiatives

- (17.) To undertake and sustain an enterprise as complicated as a university requires the cooperation of many different people filling many different roles. The efforts of talented and caring staff actualize the expertise and dedication of the faculty. The work of teaching and research is central to the existence of the university, but would be impossible without the support of other people in other roles, striving for the same excellence.
- (18.) Fundamental to the self-definition of a comprehensive university is the belief that all realms of knowledge contribute to our understanding of the world. The natural sciences inquire into the workings of the world at their most basic level. The social sciences explore the habits of humanity and the ways in which people live together. The humanities examine the articulations of the meanings humanity has given to its existence, and the importance of history and culture in understanding the nature of tradition and the shaping experiences of the past. The intertwinings of the knowledge gained from all these different areas and approaches form an awesome, intricate, but ultimately harmonious pattern. The professions build on this fundamental congruence of basic knowledge in preparing students to be competent, critical, caring citizens of the world.
- (19.) Ultimately, the university is dedicated to the search for truth. Again, the statement is simple, but the reality is not. None of the issues people have confronted for millennia—the structure of the world, the nature of humanity, the purpose and end of life, the relationship of the individual to society—allows for simple resolution or enduring formulation. Furthermore, investigation of these most basic and crucial issues seems to heighten awareness of difference and conflict and division. Therefore, we ground our investigations in the confidence that an open and diligent search for truth is its own best guardian, in deep respect for the people whom we study and with whom we study, and in an abiding communal commitment to the ever deepening understanding and appreciation that is wisdom.

An American University

- (20.) While focusing on the Catholic and Marianist identity of the University, we are mindful of the additional context of our educational mission as an independent university in the United States. This mindfulness is expressed in the University motto “*Pro Deo et Patria.*” The values of democracy, tolerance, equal opportunity, independence, academic freedom, and an innovative spirit join, often in a dynamic tension, with the characteristics that we will identify as Catholic and Marianist to form the University of Dayton.
- (21.) We recognize the value of the American heritage of religious freedom, which allows us to seek academic excellence while maintaining an abiding commitment to our religious tradition. We further recognize as part of our mission the task of preparing responsible citizens who will continue to work to alleviate the problems of American society, and to extend its benefits to future generations.

Thus understanding and love, that is, the knowledge of and delight in the truth, are, as it were, the two arms of the soul, with which it embraces and comprehends with all saints the length and breadth, the height and depth, that is eternity, the love, the goodness, and the wisdom of God.

—St. Bernard

A Catholic University

To know and love all

- (22.) At the core of Christianity is the affirmation of the goodness of the created world, of the love of God manifested in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and of the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit. As a Catholic university, the University of Dayton's identity is rooted in this affirmation, and in the tradition, beliefs, and practices of the Roman Catholic church.
- (23.) As a Catholic university, the University of Dayton recognizes the continuing importance of the Catholic intellectual tradition in shaping Western civilization, and the crucial contribution that tradition makes to individuals and to human society today. The University also supports the full exploration and expression of the Catholic intellectual tradition, including the accurate presentation of a plurality of positions. Such an approach to the study of the world and of human history manifests the distinctively Catholic "analogical imagination," an approach to reality that seeks to understand relationships, appreciating both similarities and differences and avoiding false dichotomies.
- (24.) Upon accepting the 1989 Marianist Award, Walter Ong spoke at some length about the meaning of the word "catholic." He noted that the early Church chose to use the Greek word *katholikos* in the Nicene Creed, rather than its Latin equivalent *universalis*. He noted that both words mean "universal," but that *universalis* carries within it the image of turning around a point, describing a circle and hence an area with boundaries. *Katholikos*, in contrast, suggests permeation, a leaven within a larger whole that expands as the whole expands. The etymology of the word "university" thus offers an image for a twofold understanding of how a university, and in particular a Catholic university, works. The university focuses intently on its own undertakings, but always while maintaining an awareness of its place in a larger whole, its leavening influence in society.
- (25.) It was Vatican II's *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* that called the Church to be a leaven in society; the university draws deeply upon Catholic social teaching in understanding its own role in the larger world. Catholic social teaching is based not only upon affirmation of the dignity of the human person and the oneness of the human family, but also upon sacred scripture and the Christian tradition, especially upon the life and teaching of Jesus. Drawing upon this heritage, the university praises those elements of government and the economy that foster widespread participation, respect for human rights, and economic and social justice. To these ends, the university seeks structural changes in the social order to address the urgent problems of poverty, homelessness, inadequate education, ecological destruction, unemployment, and the widening gap between the rich and the poor.

The embodiment of a religious heritage

- (26.) The concrete manifestations of the University of Dayton's Catholic and Marianist character take many forms, emerging sometimes in ways not immediately apparent. Some aspects of the University's identity are explicitly and identifiably Catholic or Marianist; others are not specifically Catholic or Marianist but do derive their vitality from an appeal to Catholic and Marianist (or religious or ethical or moral) values; still other aspects of the University's character seem of themselves not religious at all, but derive at least some of their strength from its Catholic and Marianist traditions.

- (27.) Examples are particularly helpful here. Courses in Roman Catholic theology, the existence of the Center for Christian Renewal, and the presence of Marianists on campus are obvious signs of the University's distinct identity, as are the daily liturgies in the Chapel, the General Education requirement of four courses in Religious Studies and/or Philosophy, and the various projects dedicated to the service of both the local and national Church. Other University of Dayton endeavors such as service organizations, legal assistance to the poor, the development of low-income neighborhoods, and on-campus explorations of contemporary issues affecting the family, may not be specifically Catholic and Marianist, but are pursued at the University of Dayton because of their consonance with the values those traditions espouse.
- (28.) Still others of the University's projects may seem to some to have little or no explicitly religious character—e.g., decisions about curricular reform; the importance of community celebrations; fostering a community atmosphere for student living; research into electro-optics and human-computer interaction; the professional formation of teachers for educational leadership. Nonetheless, the University's Catholic and Marianist heritage and philosophy affirm the integration of the religious perspective with all the work of the world, and shape distinctively the way we pursue all of these projects.
- (29.) Thus, the University's Catholic and Marianist identity is manifested in the University's commitment to excellence in many areas besides the classroom: in programs and organizations such as Campus Ministry, the Marian Library and the International Marian Research Institute, the Children's Center for Young Learners, the Continuing Education programs, the Centers for Advanced Manufacturing, for Business and Economic Research, for Christian Renewal, and for the Study of Family Development, the Law Clinic, and dozens of others.

Research and the integration of knowledge

- (30.) Because the Catholic intellectual tradition is devoted to the discovery of truth in its constantly emerging fullness, research is particularly prized within a Catholic university. Searching the mundane for the transcendent through research brings scholars to examine systematically the particulars of the world to discover and to formulate some intimation of the universal. This pilgrimage of discovery requires us to rely on both faith and reason, to use all the resources we have as scholars to confront mysteries courageously, confident that we are called to explore the heart of the most profound and pervasive realities of the world.
- (31.) The conviction that truth is whole and therefore that all knowledge is somehow interconnected has profound implications concerning both teaching and research at a Catholic university. This conviction leads us to prize interdisciplinary efforts, to encourage boldness in research, to unite in a community of teachers and learners oriented outward to the world around us. Together we acknowledge our profound obligation towards society, our commitment to transform the world by insisting on justice and testifying to the innate dignity of the person. We acknowledge also the power of the Christian tradition as both a support and a critique for the decisions we make and the courses we follow. All we do as teachers and as researchers helps to explicate the human condition, and serves as an act of Christian and social commitment.

Orthodoxy is what I am talking about- that central, vital Catholic orthodoxy which breaks out at intervals into new growth from its tough old roots, and shows up at the hot-house, chemically-forced character of so

much of the religious thinking whose criterion of value is only its “relevance” and acceptability to a particular group of people.

—Rosemary Haughton

Some characteristics of a Catholic university

- (32.) Although no list of characteristics can adequately sum up the essence of any religious tradition, some attributes are of special importance in a university context. The characteristics of Catholicism we wish here to underscore are five: (1) faith and reason; (2) scripture and tradition; (3) catholicity and ecumenism; (4) sacramental sensibility; and (5) the call to holiness exemplified by Mary and the saints. A Catholic university asserts the inseparability of faith and reason, provides an hospitable environment for the study of scripture and tradition as sources of revelation, and recognizes the importance of Catholicism’s relationship to other religious traditions. In doing these things as well as many others, the Catholic university affirms the sacred nature of all reality, and rejoices in the people who participate together in the enterprise.

No one believes anything unless one first thought it to be believable . . . Everything which is believed should be believed after thought has preceded... Not everyone who thinks believes, since many think in order not to believe, but everyone who believes thinks . . .

—Augustine

Faith and Reason

- (33.) The Catholic tradition treasures both faith and reason as guides to discovering what is true, cherishing what is good, and enjoying what is beautiful. A lively and critical intellect is not a hindrance but an ally to deep faith; a deep and reverent faith can be light and sustenance to the work of the intellect. Catholicism therefore manifests an openness to truth wherever it may be encountered. The Catholic tradition by its nature is compelled to foster a mutually enriching dialogue between faith and culture, especially with regard to philosophy, literature, and the natural and social sciences.
- (34.) This dialogue, while often vital to and sometimes decisive in the history of Western culture, has not been without its dark periods, such as the Spanish Inquisition and the process against Galileo. Current disputes about faithful dissent and the limits of academic freedom are far from settled. Nonetheless, the dialogue between faith and the culture is sustained and carried forward by the strong belief that truth is one and will not ultimately contradict itself. In those who commit themselves most fervently to living out their faith within their own cultures, this belief enkindles an impassioned capability for profound human achievements. The wit of Teresa of Avila, the humor of Philip Neri, the wisdom of Thomas Aquinas, the compassion of Dorothy Day, and the courage of Oscar Romero all demonstrate how faith can sharpen intelligence and intelligence can enhance faith.
- (35.) Reliance on both faith and reason is affirmed by the very existence of a Catholic university, by the fact that Catholicism sees the life of the mind as a vital dimension of human experience. In addition, the pursuit of scientific and technological research is not peripheral to the University of Dayton’s identity as Catholic and Marianist, but

on the contrary is integral to it; the mutuality of faith and reason assures us that all knowledge of creation can increase our awareness of the Creator.

Scripture and Tradition

- (36.) Tradition is the handing on of the saving message of Jesus, the core of which is recorded as Scripture. The Catholic Church looks to scripture and to tradition as complementary channels of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Such revelation is faithfully handed on, and interpreted properly, within the lived experience of Christian communities. Catholics affirm the authority of bishops, particularly of the Pope, believing their authority to be in continuity with that of the Apostles. In the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, Catholics have rediscovered, through a deeper reading of Scripture and a renewed understanding of tradition, a new commitment to sharing authority (collegiality), seeking unity (ecumenism), and implementing new forms of service in the Church and in the world (the diaconate and lay ministries).

Catholicity and Ecumenism

- (37.) Catholicism in its very name means a commitment to a unity and a completeness that respect the differences that come from the Spirit. Throughout its history Christianity has been beset with divisions, many of which continue today. Since the Second Vatican Council, Catholics have reassessed their attitude toward other Christians. Through ecumenical dialogues, community projects, and worship services, Catholics are open to and cooperate with people of various religious backgrounds. In recent years, such efforts have extended beyond Christians to people of other religions.

Sacramental Sensibility

- (38.) Catholics, as people with a sacramental sensibility, recognize that the ordinary things of this world—birth and death, water, light, a meal shared—signal the presence and grace of God. It is this recognition of the goodness of creation that explains the importance Catholics place on the role of ritual, art, and architecture in living the life of faith. Catholics discover the presence of God in all reality, not solely in the seven sacraments, but also in the Church, in loving human relationships, in the face of the poor and the suffering, and, most particularly, in the person of Jesus, the human face of God. For the Catholic, then, all reality—people, things, human history, the world itself—is sacramental.
- (39.) The commemorative service held for St. Joseph Hall after the fire in 1987 was an expression of the University's instinctively and consciously sacramental sensibility. The service acknowledged the importance of place in our lives, as well as the real sense of loss people felt. It also gave thanks that no one was hurt, and did so with prayer, singing, storytelling, and celebration—all of which gave witness to the presence of God in our midst.

The Call to Holiness—Mary and the Saints

- (40.) Catholics believe that the grace of God may so transform people that their lives become recognizably holy; that is, reflective of God's goodness and love. The great diversity of the lives of the saints, living and dead, canonized and uncanonized, brings all people everywhere to see that lives of holiness are possible. Holiness in some invites holiness in all. Monica's prayers converted Augustine; Dominic, Francis, and Clare inspired their age; Mother Teresa touches our own.
- (41.) But the saints are more than inspirational examples to the living. They are the grace-filled people whom God permits a role in saving others. Mary was chosen by God to play a unique role. As the mother of Jesus, she is the richest example of the transforming power of grace in an individual human being. Through her faith, she consented to God, and conceived and brought forth for all the world Jesus, her savior and that of all humanity. Her holiness, and that of all the saints, contributes to God's saving work among us. Saints, therefore, are not

only examples of holiness, but participants in God's saving activity.

=

The Brother animated by faith finds an image of his heavenly family in his earthly family; he sees God in the members who compose it, the Holy Spirit in the sentiments of charity that reign therein. The Love of God diffuses itself in our hearts given to us through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). The family of Nazareth here on earth has given us the most beautiful image of this life.

—*Constitution of the Society of Mary, Art. 303, 1891*

A Marianist University

Some characteristics of a Marianist university

- (42.) The University of Dayton is conducted in the tradition of the Society of Mary. Founded at Bordeaux, France in 1817 by Father William Joseph Chaminade, the Society of Mary is part of the *Family of Mary*. The Family of Mary includes the Society of Mary (S.M.—religious men); the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (F.M.I.—religious women), founded at Agen, France in 1816 by Adèle deBatz de Tranquelléon, with the inspiration of Father Chaminade; and various apostolic communities (lay men and women). The spirituality of the Family of Mary is marked by two distinctive characteristics. The tradition gives a place of honor to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a model of faith for all believers and also emphasizes community as the indispensable elements in the formation and education of all persons.
- (43.) Within the university context, five elements of the Marianist tradition have particular resonance: (1) education, (2) community, (3) collaboration, (4) service, and (5) Marian spirituality. Open to people of all backgrounds, a Marianist education seeks to develop in its students not only competence but also a sense of community—of people living and working and praying together, focusing their energy and attention beyond the boundaries of the community that they may serve as witnesses to the Gospel in the world. For inspiration and guidance in all of these tasks, Marianist communities look to and celebrate the relationship between Jesus and Mary.

Education

- (44.) The first Marianist educators used to repeat, “We teach to educate.” In other words, Marianists are committed to developing the entire person, intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually. All members, lay and religious, of Marianist communities are encouraged to discover and develop their gifts and talents, and to contribute to the building of stronger communities of faith dedicated to realizing a more just society.
- (45.) The Marianist tradition of education is an inclusive one. Historically, the membership of the Society of Mary included teachers, priests, and manual laborers. Additionally, Marianists established schools open to people of every social class, and offered a broad education that featured not only the liberal arts but also business and agriculture. Furthermore, shortly after the Society's foundation, Father Chaminade extended its teaching mission to the teaching of teachers, thereby insuring the perpetuation and the ever-widening influence of the Marianist vision. From its own early days, the University of Dayton has offered a broad range of curricula, not only the traditional liberal arts and sciences, but the practical professional courses of business, education, and engineering.

Community

- (46.) Following the example of Father Chaminade, the Marianist tradition frequently links the idea of community with family. At the time of the Society's foundation, Father Chaminade and the first Marianists instinctively looked to the Holy Family—Mary, Jesus, and Joseph—as an image of the relationships that ought to be shared by people of faith. The Holy Family as a model of community offers many images of the relationships among people beyond those of the conventional nuclear family. In an educational setting, communities inspired by the Marianist spirit exist at different levels of intensity and often among persons whose roles are quite diverse—students, faculty, administrators, and staff. As is often necessary in families, such diverse communities require respect for individual differences and promote the understanding of others.
- (47.) In our own time members of the Family of Mary look also to other New Testament images of Jesus and Mary for insight into the nature of community. Mary's presence at the foot of the cross (John 19:25-27) and in the Upper Room with the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:14) are evidence of her faithfulness, her courage, her perseverance, and her solidarity with us.
- (48.) Importantly, the faith that inspires members of the Family of Mary is apostolic. The work "apostolic," prized by Father Chaminade, means literally to be "sent forth." Therefore, Marianist communities do not exist solely for the purposes of mutual support and self-preservation. They exist also for the sake of witness to the Gospel and of service to others.
- (49.) One of the most frequently cited examples of the distinctiveness of the University of Dayton is its sense of community. Many people have remarked, after even brief contact with the University, on the evident sense of belonging and family spirit which seems to characterize interaction at many levels. Continuing efforts at the University of Dayton to foster a sense of community stem from its historical and traditional importance among Marianists.

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them.

—I Corinthians 12:4-6

Collaboration

- (50.) The first Marianists saw in the Holy Family a community of persons who, though quite different, deeply respected one another. Moved by that image, Marianists have over the years striven to embody that respect through a special spirit of collaboration, not only within the Family of Mary, but also between the Marianists and the local and universal church. Within the Society of Mary, for example, brothers and priests serve one another without rank or privilege. In the Marianist spirit, religious and laity, faculty, staff, and students, dedicated to realizing common goals, come together with minimal role distinctions. It has been said that one works with Marianists rather than for them.

Service

- (51.) Since their founding, Marianists have seen as a part of their identity the commitment to collaborative effort at transforming the institutions of society. As a young priest during the French Revolution, Father Chaminade witnessed the destruction of much of the Church's life in France. Realizing that the renewal of Christianity required the rebuilding of institutions, he formed hundreds of apostolic communities of faith. In fact, both the Society of Mary and the Daughters of Mary Immaculate grew up out of such communities. For Marianists, service calls the community to provide direct aid to the needy, to educate students as agents of change, and to bring about changes that make it more possible to live the Gospel fully in contemporary society.

Marian Spirituality

- (52.) The relationship between Mary and Jesus colors distinctively how Marianists think about their relationship to God and others. Marianists imitate Jesus in his love for his mother, and at the same time strive to embody the qualities of Mary herself, such as faith, life-giving love, humility, attentive listening to God's Word, gentle but firm persistence, patient acceptance of the sufferings that are an inevitable part of life, and the courage to risk oneself for the sake of the Gospel. The Marianist spirit, grounded in a deep faith in the power of the Word, brings forth new life in the service of others.

One of the greatest evils of the day among those outside of prison is their sense of futility. Young people say, What is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time; we can be responsible only for the one action of the present moment. But we can beg for an increase of love in our hearts that will vitalize and transform all our individual actions, and know that God will take them and multiply them, as Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes.

—Dorothy Day

The goal of a Catholic and Marianist university: Educating the whole person

- (53.) The ultimate embodiment of the University's Catholic and Marianist character is the education offered to our students. The ideal of an educational experience shared by all students cannot be perfectly achieved in practice; nevertheless, the articulation of the ideal forms the basis for our educational goals and is a way of measuring our success. Therefore, we explicate what our students should have learned, understood, and embraced by the end of their time at the University of Dayton—intellectually, individually, socially, and spiritually.

Intellectually

- (54.) At the University of Dayton, we offer students, first and foremost, a challenging exposure to the potential of the mind, to the richness of the intellectual life, and to the nature of tradition. We also provide thorough training in a student's chosen discipline, along with the development of those skills which mark the educated person—effective speech and writing, and the ability to think not only critically but also compassionately. The continuing integration of moral and ethical concerns across the curriculum reinforces the connection between content and application, between what students learn in the classroom and how that knowledge can be used to improve

people's lives.

Individually

- (55.) The University of Dayton is a place where students become convinced of their inherent dignity and irreplaceability as individuals and, in the midst of a culture that often encourages apathy and acquiescence, become convinced also of their own capacity for action and duty to act. We trust, too, that University of Dayton students will learn that head and heart are inextricably linked, and that faith and reason work together and are both essential. We urge students to the development of a lively curiosity that will enable learning to continue throughout life. Additionally, we offer students an atmosphere in which they may grow and be healthy not only intellectually, but also psychologically, emotionally, morally, and physically. In a community that offers support, correction, and recovery, students may experience not only achievement but also failure. We urge them also toward the development of a sense that moral integrity is to be prized above worldly success.

Socially

- (56.) The University of Dayton is a place where student can develop friendships that will last, and experience the community of teachers and learners involved in a common enterprise extending beyond the purely intellectual, involving of necessity a deep and concretely manifested respect for the dignity of all person. Membership in this community includes an appreciation of its diversity, a commitment to the fostering of that diversity, and, ultimately, a commitment to the service of humanity. A student of the University should therefore be helped to develop a sense of personal responsibility toward the immediate community, toward the universal community, and toward the environment. Participation in the many opportunities at the University of Dayton for extended service experiences can cultivate an involvement in such work that will remain long after college.

Spiritually

- (57.) A University of Dayton education provides for growth in faith as well as in intellect. Catholic students in particular, recognizing their place within a living, growing tradition, should learn to integrate Catholicism into their professional lives, to confront contemporary issues competently, and to sustain an attitude of faithful challenge to the Church, to government, and to society. But we invite and encourage all students to develop an appreciation for the breadth of the Catholic intellectual tradition including its expression among Marianists. Students of all faiths have personal and communal opportunities to develop a mature understanding of the role of religion in life, including personal prayer, devotional practice, and spiritual growth. In this religious environment, we call all students to the realization that information and knowledge, vital and good in themselves, find their ultimate significance as ways to the wisdom that is our goal, created as we are in the image and likeness of God.

Conclusion

- (58.) Both the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures testify to God's freedom and wisdom. God's freedom liberates people from slavery and invites them to live in communities lighted by wisdom, communities that respond fairly, openly, and compassionately to others. The Christian Scriptures also reveal God not as a solitary and aloof individual, but as an involved and loving community of persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus, God's tangible Word for humanity, takes that communion to the point of its highest intensity—the laying down of one's life for others.
- (59.) Both the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures likewise testify to the dignity of human beings who, created in God's image and likeness, participate in God's freedom and wisdom. As a university community that takes its inspiration from these Scriptures, we pledge ourselves to enhance human dignity by cherishing freedom, by joining in the search for wisdom, by fulfilling the desire for community, and by developing the capacity for a love willing even to die so that others might have life. Our mission as a university requires that we draw on all the many resources of our tradition—spiritual, intellectual, historical, contemporary—in our effort to ensure that the education we offer becomes even more a source of meaning, courage, replenishment, and transformation, of freedom and wisdom and community and love.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Preface

A statement such as this has value not only in articulating an essential part of the University's identity, but also in providing a resource for decisions that guide the practical, everyday life of the University. In response to the initial task given our committee by the President, we now offer specific recommendations concerning how the spirit of the Statement can be translated into action.

These recommendations cover various aspects of university life. In all of the recommendations, the primary intention is specifically the preservation and enhancement of the Catholic and Marianist identity of the University. Without a conscious effort continually to reappropriate our heritage as Catholic and Marianist, we risk being Catholic and Marianist in name only rather than in spirit and action. Maintaining the distinctiveness of our religious heritage may very well be a key to the University's thriving in the next century; even more deeply than that, however, it is a matter of being faithful to God, to our forebears, and to the integrity of our own vision.

It is difficult—but necessary and rewarding—to balance a concern for an institution's heritage with a respect for pluralism and diversity; we have tried to do so. There can be no worthwhile pluralism, however, where there are no striking differences, and there can be no striking differences unless one stands firmly for something—best of all, for coherent principles and a lived tradition. When we emphasize the importance of that which is Catholic and Marianist, we do so in a way inclusive of and respectful of other religious traditions, in a way that recognizes and appreciates diversity in culture and in thought. We hope that our recommendations, read in conjunction with the Statement—which itself can be read as an extended recommendation about the life of the University—will be interpreted in the open and inclusive spirit in which they are intended.

This emphasis on the University's heritage will, we hope, complement the University's commitment to excellence in all areas, particularly the development of the Academic Plan, in which specifically academic concerns will receive extended treatment not possible here. Thus, these recommendations must be read in conjunction with the work of all the University bodies whose decisions affect the academic and social life of the University. In all these endeavors, we count on the University community's enduring sense of openness, criticism, adventure, and collaboration in receiving and responding to these recommendations.

Recommendations

Academic Life

To maintain a vital group of faculty, situated throughout the University, who are intellectually committed to the Catholic tradition and to encourage an appropriate core group of faculty in their pursuit of scholarly research on the Catholic tradition. Pursuit of this goal would include continuing to foster the presence on campus of Marianists dedicated to the intellectual life.